



EPISCOPAL NEWS SERVICE

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The House has already approved the bill by a vote of 14. The bill would create a paid holiday for state employees and require paid time off for other workers. It would also allow for the day to be observed on a day other than the King's birthday.

"We believe that Martin Luther King Jr. was one of the great leaders in the United States who has inspired a nation," said the Rev. Dr. Joseph P. Hagan, Episcopal Bishop of Albany, who has been a leader for more than 30 years in efforts to bring the holiday. "It is a great moral victory--not only for those who have died in the struggle for civil rights but for the legislature and the church and people who are making it so."

Part of the bill came just one month after President Ronald Reagan's Browning made a special trip to Memphis in January to offer personally to a number of leaders and members of the clergy. Browning was asked to make the trip by Bishop Hagan, who has been the main force behind the bill. It is a nearly identical bill to the one that passed in the House in March of last year.

Browning's trip was a key step in the process of getting the bill passed. He was the first to visit the site of the assassination and to meet with the families of the victims. "It was a very important step," Hagan said. "It was a very important step in the process of getting the bill passed."

"We want to see that the bill is passed," Hagan said. "We want to see that the bill is passed. We want to see that the bill is passed. We want to see that the bill is passed."

Bill Hagan, a member of the House of Representatives, said the bill is a key step in the process of getting the bill passed. "It is a very important step," Hagan said. "It is a very important step in the process of getting the bill passed."

Many of the members of the bill believe the issue should be decided by the public. "It is a very important step," Hagan said. "It is a very important step in the process of getting the bill passed."

If the bill is passed, Bishop Hagan said he expects some of the most important events in the history of Albany. "It is a very important step," Hagan said. "It is a very important step in the process of getting the bill passed."

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--New York Times, Albany, April 19, 1986

90136

ARIZONA ACCEPTS KING HOLIDAY, BROWNING MAY HAVE TIPPED BALANCE

by Nan Ross

Arizona has a new state holiday to honor slain civil rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr.

Gov. Rose Mofford signed the bill creating the holiday on May 16, hours after Arizona's House of Representatives passed the measure by a vote of 35 for and 25 against. The Senate had already approved the bill by a vote of 16 to 14. The new holiday creates a paid holiday for state employees and restores a paid Columbus Day holiday. It rescinds a law signed last year that replaced Columbus Day with the King holiday.

"We rejoice that Arizona has become one of the 47 states in the Union that have instituted a Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday," said the Rt. Rev. Joseph T. Heistand, Episcopal bishop of Arizona, who has been a leader for more than four years in efforts to secure the holiday. "It is a great moral victory--and we can thank God that Gov. Mofford and members of the legislature had the courage and leadership to do what needed to be done."

Passage of the bill came just one month after Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning made a special trip to Phoenix to discuss the issue personally with a number of legislators and community leaders. Browning was asked to make the trip by Bishop Heistand when the two discussed the issue during a meeting in nearby Scottsdale. The Episcopal Church's General Convention is scheduled to meet in Phoenix next July.

Browning stressed during his meetings that the King Day issue is not one of politics or race, but rather one of morality, justice, and peace. He said it wasn't a provincial or even a national issue. "It's really an international issue and a deeply moral one. What Arizona does with it reflects on America."

"We were told that Bishop Browning's visit had a tremendous impact on members of the legislature and the business community," Heistand said. "We are certain it played a large part in the successful resolution of the issue."

Bill Jamieson, a deacon at Trinity Cathedral in Phoenix, escorted Browning during his visit and said the presiding bishop "helped move the King holiday from a solely political issue to one with deep moral and ethical overtones. The spirituality he projected clearly had an effect on everyone he met," Jamieson said.

Many opponents of the bill believe the issue should be decided by the public in a referendum next November--and there is a movement afoot to do just that. Spearheaded by Evan Mecham, the state's former governor who was impeached and removed from office in 1988, the drive must collect 43,350 signatures by August 14 to place the issue on the November 6th ballot.

If the Mecham effort is successful, Bishop Heistand said he expects "one of the most divisive, nastiest campaigns in the history of Arizona." However, he and other community leaders plan to organize "a very positive campaign to educate the people of Arizona so that they may truly understand the real meaning of the issue. We believe the citizens of Arizona will defeat such a referendum," he said.

The city of Phoenix eliminated Columbus Day four years ago, establishing a King holiday instead. "I think I received three letters of protest," Phoenix mayor Paul Johnson told Browning. "Even Mecham and the legislature have made a much bigger deal out of this than it deserves."

--Nan Ross is director of communications for the Diocese of Arizona.

90137

EPISCOPALIANS JOIN PROTESTS AGAINST DEATH PENALTY, PRESIDING BISHOP RELEASES NEW STATEMENT AFFIRMING CHURCH'S POSITION

Episcopalians in Florida, Georgia, and North Carolina joined protests against the death penalty, reaffirming a position first taken by the Episcopal Church in 1958.

In Raleigh, representatives of the Diocese of North Carolina joined a group of about 150 in a worship service and march to the state legislature, carrying signs and crosses with the names of the 85 people on death row in the state.

The Rev. Barbara Armstrong, a deacon and legislative lobbyist for the diocese, said the activities were part of an effort to build support for repeal of the death penalty during next year's legislative session. "The most basic principles and most cherished teachings of the Judeo-Christian faith are fundamentally and unmistakably opposed to death as punishment," she said in an interview with the press. "We think the public needs to be protected, and we think victims need to be compensated. We just don't think we have to kill people to do those things," she said.

The Rev. Jim Lewis, director of social ministries for the diocese, said the death penalty is "the toughest issue of all because it runs counter to the mood of our country right now." Lewis said people are frustrated and want to get tough on crime by building more prisons and using the death penalty. He said he thinks the tide may be changing, however, and people may be ready to listen to other alternatives, other solutions. "It is time for the church to get deeper involved in criminal justice issues," Lewis said.

Bishop Robert Estill, who has been working for repeal of the death penalty for 10 years, read a new statement by Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning (see full text in Newsfeatures section), prepared with the encouragement of the Episcopal Peace Fellowship.

"The taking of human life diminishes us as a people," Browning's statement says, because when we use the death penalty "we end up committing the very act we found so repugnant in the first place." The taking of human life "is an affront to God" because Christians believe that "all persons are made in the image of God, thus making all people holy. The death penalty is an assault on God's purposes in creation."

Browning said he was troubled by "the recent wave of support for and use of capital punishment" and added that violence is no solution. He encouraged church people to "light a torch of conscience in our nation" and push politicians to avoid using the issue for political gains. "This is not about partisan politics or vote counting. It is about morality, human dignity, and respect for ourselves as people of justice and mercy."

The presiding bishop's statement was also read at a "Lighting the Torch" rally in Atlanta, concluding a march by opponents of the death penalty from Florida to Georgia. The Rev. Gray Temple joined a group of several hundred who met in Woodruff Park in a rally sponsored by Amnesty International. Temple said the statement was "wonderfully received and was interrupted several times by applause, especially the part that says this is a moral issue, not a political one." Temple joined the march to the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center where a series of workshops focused on peace and justice issues. "A number of people made the connection between the death penalty and issues such as apartheid, racial discrimination, and poverty," Temple said.

90138

FESTIVAL OF CREATION CALLS FOR NEW PARTNERSHIP OF CHURCH AND CONSERVATIONISTS

by James Solheim

Leaders of the churches and the conservation movement culminated a meeting at Washington National Cathedral on May 19 with a call for a new partnership in defending the earth.

Prince Philip of Great Britain, president of the World Wildlife Fund and a conservationist with an international reputation, said the North American Conference on Religion and Ecology may be the beginning of a partnership that could change attitudes and forge "a new movement of church participation in ecology."

In an atmosphere of "anxiety and uncertainty," religions should reassert their role of guidance, shedding "ambivalent attitudes" toward science and technology. "Faith has the power to influence humanity," the prince asserted. "The spiritual element in human nature can help bring things back into balance."

William Reilly, administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, moderated a panel during the day-long "Festival of Creation" that included Prince Philip, Dr. Jessica Mathews, vice president of the World Resources Institute, and German theologian Jurgen Moltmann.

Mathews began with a litany of disasters during the 1980s--Bhopal, Chernobyl, oil spills, dying forests, drought, famine, ozone depletion--"and more hungry people on earth than ever before," she said. Mathews believes there is a new sense of urgency "based on the conviction that man's impact on the planet is creating irreversible damage." Ecology is the "revolutionary science of the future," she added, and survival of the planet will depend on our ability to "change how we think and behave as a global community." Calling herself an optimist who thinks individuals acting together can make a difference, Mathews called for "gathering the sparks into a bonfire of change."

"The ecological crisis is also a religious crisis of the Western world," theologian Jurgen Moltmann told the audience of over 700 people. Calling for reconciliation with nature, he said a reorientation of basic convictions and attitudes is required because greed and exploitation have dominated our actions. The decisive question is whether we view nature as our property or see ourselves as part of a larger natural reality. "Does nature belong to us--or are we part of nature?" he asked.

We need to rediscover the divine spirit in creation, the mystery of the triune God, a communal God that is known in relationships, in love, and mutuality, Moltmann contended. "Whatever we do to nature, we do to the center of nature--Christ," he said. "What Christians do in their churches is relative to the whole cosmos. A crisis in the cosmos is therefore a crisis for the church," he concluded.

When Moltmann called for a general bill of rights for nature, similar to the 1948 Declaration of Human Rights, the cathedral rang with loud applause. "The natural world should be under the protection of governments," he said in arguing for an ecological strategy based on God's covenant in Genesis that establishes justice in creation.

"We keep coming back to the three basic issues--population, technology, and values," Reilly said in closing the panel discussion.

Bishop Bennett Sims, representing the presiding bishop, said that a new partnership between the church and the conservation community was "not only realistic, you can already see it happening." He pointed to the New Year's message of Pope John Paul II, and its acknowledgment of the threat to the earth, as a "bellwether." Sims argues that the church "needs to add its intellectual and moral vigor to the movement," reminding our society that the issues are spiritual and moral ones.

The cathedral also hosted an Ecology Fair during the day that featured a series of workshops and booths to highlight specific issues. An afternoon interfaith service "in celebration of the good earth" included representatives from Jewish, Christian, Muslim, American Indian, Buddhist, and Sikh religions.

On Sunday, May 20, the cathedral hosted a "festival celebration of the holy Eucharist in thanksgiving for the Creation Facade." In his sermon Provost Charles Perry said that "we are called to defend creation from the gods of chaos," even though we are often on the side of chaos because we are polluters. Perry said respect for creation is a clear fundamental in the Christian tradition--but one that is "consistently ignored."

90139

ANGLICAN BISHOP FROM KENYA 'SHOCKED' WHEN HE IS PREVENTED FROM PREACHING AGAINST HOMOSEXUALITY IN CALIFORNIA PARISH

An Anglican bishop from Kenya called a press conference May 21 to blast a gay rector for allegedly barring him from preaching against homosexuality.

Bishop Alexander Muge from the Diocese of Eldoret, on a speaking and fundraising tour for African Team Ministries, was scheduled to preach at St. Luke's Church in Walnut Creek, near San Francisco. During a dinner conversation with the Rev. Gary Ost, Muge said that the decline in the Episcopal Church "is the result of the secularization of the Gospel and the lack of self-discipline (including homosexuality) among the clergy of the church," according to the bishop's news release. During some heated conversation, Ost identified himself as a homosexual who is out to his bishop and parish. He then withdrew the invitation for the bishop to preach, according to accounts of the incident.

"I told him the Bible condemns all sorts of immorality--adultery, fornication, and homosexuality, and that confessed homosexuals will not inherit the Kingdom of God unless they repent and change their lifestyle," Muge said at the press conference arranged by local supporters of the Episcopal Synod of America (ESA). The ESA was formed a year ago as "a church within the church" to oppose what it perceives as liberal trends in the Episcopal Church, including issues of sexual morality.

In his opening remarks at the press conference, Muge said he wanted to "express my sorrow at the state of the church of Christ in this country with a hope that my public displeasure might be a means of encouragement to the remnants of the Lord's flock, not only in the USA, but the world over."

Bishop William Swing of the Diocese of California issued a strong statement questioning Muge's tactics in revealing the confidences of a priest in a public forum. Swing also expressed annoyance that the bishop entered the

diocese without notifying the local bishop. "If Bishop Muge felt deeply about a spiritual matter in the Diocese of California, why didn't he sit down and talk about it first with the bishop of the Diocese of California, rather than hold a press conference?" Swing asked.

Swing said he suspected Muge was "naively being used by some background group that is trying to exploit his moral bias in matters of human sexuality to further their own cause," an obvious reference to ESA sympathizers in the diocese who actively encouraged Muge to go public with his criticism, according to diocesan sources.

Swing pointed out that his diocese, and the whole Episcopal Church, has been studying the issue of sexuality. "For Bishop Muge to fly in here and, in a few days and with an extremely limited participation in this family's problem, to pronounce his conclusion, is a marginal contribution, at best, to the full life of our diocese." It may strengthen some local voices of dissent but it doesn't enrich the deeper discussion of the issues, Swing said.

90140

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES CALLS COLUMBUS AN 'INVADER'

As the nation prepares to celebrate the 500th anniversary of the arrival of Columbus in America, the governing board of the National Council of Churches (NCC) passed a resolution calling his arrival in the New World an "invasion" that resulted in the slavery and genocide of native peoples. It asked member churches to regard 1992 as "a year of reflection and repentance."

The board said that "what represented newness of freedom, hope, and opportunity for some was the occasion for oppression, degradation, and genocide for others," particularly the indigenous people of America and the Africans brought here as slaves.

"American people have so digested the myth of American history that they have lost sight of the truth--the pain of so many people who live on the continent," said the Rev. George Tinker, an Osage Indian and member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church who introduced the resolution. He said the celebration "symbolizes a very personal and painful history of genocide" and that the resolution means the council can "take some steps to be part of healing."

A substitute resolution was introduced by Bishop David Reed of Louisville, Kentucky. Although it acknowledged the injustice and pain suffered by Native Americans following the arrival of European settlers, it sought to add some of the positive aspects of the last five centuries by adding a two-page "message to the churches." Reed said the original resolution was too negative. "Many of us find it hard to state this is not a time for celebration," he said. "There are many things over the past 500 years to thank God for."

The two resolutions touched off a heated debate among delegates to the semiannual meeting of the NCC board in Pittsburgh. After Reed's resolution was weakened, the original resolution was passed easily.

In other actions the governing board:

*expressed its "extreme outrage and distress" at the recent Supreme Court

ruling against Native Americans who were denied unemployment compensation after being fired for using peyote in a ritual ceremony of the Native American Church;

- *celebrated the publication of the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible, a major new ecumenical translation it had authorized and endorsed, in a service of blessing and thanksgiving at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral;

- *announced a search process to find a new general secretary, with expectations that a candidate will be presented at the board's November meeting;

- *adjourned and transformed itself into the General Board, in line with restructure of the council;

- *approved a new policy on "equal pay for work of equal value" and gave first reading to a proposed policy statement on family violence and abuse;

- *appealed to U.S. companies to stop buying Salvadoran coffee and urged the Administration to negotiate the withdrawal of military personnel and installations from the Philippines;

- *commended President George Bush for his "dialogical approach" to the current crisis in the Soviet Union;

- *condemned the occupation by Jewish settlers of St. John's Hospice in the Christian quarter of Jerusalem's Old City;

- *thanked God for "the working of the Spirit in the unprecedented events which have taken place in Central and Eastern Europe during the past year"; and

- *renewed its commitment to work for the day "when all South Africans will be truly free," and called for renewed efforts to "maintain and strengthen economic sanctions" as a means of change.

90141

CHURCH PERIODICAL CLUB GRANTS SUPPORT BUILDING LIBRARIES

Grants from the Church Periodical Club (CPC) will replace books in libraries in the Virgin Islands and the Solomon Islands that were recently destroyed by fierce winds of Hurricane Hugo and the Cyclone Namu.

Selwyn College, in Honiara, Solomon Islands, received a CPC grant to stock the shelves of a new library that is crucial to a country in which only 18 percent of the children are able to attend high school because of limited classrooms. A grant to replace library books lost during Hurricane Hugo will be sent to the school of lay ministry in the Virgin Islands.

The grants to the libraries in the Caribbean and the Pacific islands were part of a total of more than \$16,000 given to a variety of requests for Christian reading and teaching materials throughout the world. The CPC, now in its second century of service, provides grants to organizations and individuals twice a year.

Students at St. Phillip's College in the Seychelles (Indian Ocean islands) will receive books to establish "start-up" libraries. A 1982 Episcopal Hymnal, recently translated into American Sign Language, will aid the Episcopal Conference on the Deaf in its outreach to congregations with deaf members.

Other recipients of spring 1990 grants include:

- * the library of the newest diocese in the Philippine Episcopal Church;
- * the Episcopal Church of Brazil to help celebrate Brazil's 100th anniversary by providing the Book of Common Prayer in Portuguese;
- * the Russian Orthodox Church will receive copies of the special Russian "Millennium Bible New Testament that is in short supply in Russia because of printing problems. The request was made by the Taize community in France which has arranged to print a million paperback copies of this special edition;
- * the Mission and Ministry Office of the Northern Philippines;
- * Bishop Lutaaya Theological College in Mityana, Uganda;
- * the Mindola Anglican Seminary in Itwe, Zambia;
- * the St. Nicholas Theological Seminary, Cape Coast, Ghana;
- * the Christian Training Centre, Popondetta, Papua New Guinea.



news briefs

90142

Lutherans in Finland vote to allow women bishops

By more than the required three-quarters majority, the Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland (SELK) has voted to allow women to become bishops. The measure is expected to take effect next year after the Finnish parliament adds its anticipated approval. SELK Archbishop John Vikstrom, who voted with the majority, said he did not expect the consecration of a woman bishop in the near future. About 400 women have been ordained as SELK priests since a 1988 ruling made their ordination possible.

Diocese of Pennsylvania struck twice more by fires

The Diocese of Pennsylvania has experienced two additional losses by fire in the wake of an April 6 blaze that destroyed the Church of the Annunciation. On May 12, a fire struck the parish house at St. Martin's, Radnor, on Philadelphia's Main Line, and partially destroyed the nearly 300-year-old structure. No one was injured in the incident, which is currently under investigation. Three days later, a four-alarm fire of suspicious origin destroyed St. Paul's Church in the Juniata Park section of Philadelphia. The parish rector, the Rev. Thomas Reed, was hospitalized for smoke inhalation. Reed had been threatened at knifepoint by an intruder the previous weekend. The church maintains an active community presence, including its sponsorship of Wednesday lunches, a practice it has continued since the Depression.

Gallup says Americans preach, rather than practice, a religious life

George Gallup, Jr., the nation's senior pollster, said that although survey data indicate almost all Americans profess belief in God and 40 percent attend weekly religious services, the actual ethical conduct of believers does not differ substantially from that of nonbelievers. Speaking to the 400 participants at the Evangelical Press Association's national convention, held in Colorado Springs, Colorado, on May 7 to 9, Gallup remarked that "we revere the Bible, but we don't read it." He pointed, however, to the exceptions to the survey trend. These are the "hidden saints," Gallup added--that 10 percent who are not only dedicated to their religion but are actively involved in helping other human beings.

Church for the disabled becomes a reality in New Jersey

The Bethesda Christian Center, a barrier-free structure designed to accommodate 250 people in wheelchairs, has become the first church in New Jersey aimed at the mobility-impaired community. The Rev. Kenneth J. Young, the church's 36-year-old Assemblies of God pastor who is himself paralyzed

from the neck down, said he envisioned "building a congregation of 50 percent disabled and 50 percent able-bodied. When you have a lot of disabled people you need workers to both transport them and help out in general," he added. Young said that he hopes the 10,600-square-foot building will serve as a prototype for similar endeavors elsewhere. Computer training classes will be held at the new center, as well seminars aimed at better integrating families that include physically challenged persons.

Tornado strikes Episcopal camp in Texas but no one is seriously injured

More than 80 clergy spouses and bishops escaped serious injury at an annual gathering on April 27 when a tornado struck Camp Allen in the Diocese of Texas. One of the residential units of the camp-and-conference center was totally destroyed by the tornado, which also damaged a second unit and some 350 trees on the 780-acre complex. Only one person was temporarily hospitalized, as a result of a foot lesion. The 1990 summer camp program will go on as planned, camp rector Jeremiah Ward said, but some conferences will need to be rescheduled. The center faces several months of restoration work at a cost of several million dollars.

Religious freedom restored in Nepal

Yielding to public demonstrations, the government of Nepal reinstituted religious and civil freedoms in April. Distribution of religious literature and public affirmations of faith are again possible, according to Loknath Manaen, executive secretary of the Bible Society in Nepal. A dusk-to-dawn curfew has also been lifted, and the Nepalese government has promised to release all Christians imprisoned for their religious beliefs, Manaen reported in a message to the international United Bible Societies. Manaen added that now "there is absolutely no hint of hesitation to listen to the Gospel." Nepal had been the world's only country with Hinduism as the state religion.

Reservations voiced about Decade on Evangelism

The Associated Parishes for Liturgy and Mission (APLM), meeting recently in New Orleans, expressed reservations concerning the Episcopal Church's Decade of Evangelism. The unofficial North American Anglican group lamented that *evangelism* is a term that "leads to confusion, misunderstanding, and anxiety." The APLM council cautioned against using evangelism "simply to increase our numbers and income.... Our first calling is ... seeking and serving Christ in all persons, and respecting the dignity of every human being."

Welsh Anglicans to weigh ordination of women to the priesthood

The Anglican Church in Wales has voted to take up the issue of the ordination of women priests. The issue will be discussed at parish and diocesan levels, with a report projected for delivery at the September 1991 meeting of the church's governing body. Welsh Anglicans currently ordain women as deacons.

Waite said to be healthy despite prolonged captivity

Terry Waite, the Archbishop of Canterbury's special envoy, is reportedly alive and well, according to a May 13 London *Sunday Mail* report quoting an informed Lebanese Druze spokesman. "Waite is being held in acceptable conditions in the southern suburbs [of Beirut] and is receiving regular medical attention," the informant was quoted as saying. The new reports apparently

aim to dispel rumors that have circulated about the death of the 50-year-old Waite, who vanished in West Beirut in January 1987, while pursuing negotiations to free Western hostages. He is thought to be held captive by militants affiliated with the pro-Iranian Party of God.

Challenge to Roman Catholic Church's tax-exempt status fails

On April 30, the Supreme Court ended a challenge to the tax-exempt status of the Roman Catholic Church when it let stand an appeals court decision that found a grouping of abortion-rights supporters to be without standing to bring suit. The decade-long effort by the plaintiffs had alleged that the church was engaged in anti-abortion political activities considered off-limits for tax-exempt organizations under the Internal Revenue Code. This, their argument went, gave one side an unconstitutional advantage in the abortion debate. In acknowledging that the legal challenge was now a "dead letter," Lawrence Lader, president of Abortion Rights Mobilization Inc., organizers of the lawsuit, said, "I just don't know how you'd come up with a plaintiff to fit the Court's definition of standing." To have standing to sue, a plaintiff must clearly demonstrate that he or she has suffered in a concrete way.

Nominating committee continues to welcome suggestions

At its second meeting of the triennium, the Joint Standing Committee on Nominations has received the names of 12 bishops, 59 priests, one deacon, and 31 laypersons as recommendations for positions on church committees and boards. The elections are part of the agenda at next summer's General Convention in Phoenix. Any member of the church may suggest nominees to the committee on forms available from diocesan bishops. Final deadline for sending names to the committee is August 1 and final decisions will be made at the committee's meeting later that month.

First woman presides at Eucharist in United Kingdom

The Rev. Susan Cole-King, daughter of the late bishop of Birmingham and a deacon who was ordained three years ago in New York, celebrated the Eucharist at a Scottish cathedral--the first time a woman has presided at the Eucharist in the United Kingdom. She used the second alternative rite of the Episcopal Church to comply with the Scottish rule that women ordained elsewhere may "preside at the eucharistic rite of their own province while temporarily resident in Scotland," as long as the diocesan bishop agrees. Cole-King was in Scotland leading a conference on Julian theology, at the invitation of the Movement for Whole Ministry. "There was no publicity and it was not a demonstration of anything. It was just a normal piece of pastoral work," said Bishop Michael Hare-Duke of St. Andrews, who gave permission for the celebration.

Church of England launches advertising campaign

The Church of England has hired a London ad agency to launch a campaign seeking to reverse the slide in church attendance. "Jesus wept," reads one headline, followed by copy that says, "Last Sunday 37% watched the snooker, 23% went down to the pub, 14% washed the car, 8% stayed in bed till noon. And 12% went to church." Another is aimed at increasing understanding of the church's clergy. "The money's diabolical. The hours are ungodly. It's a miracle anybody does it. C of E clergy. It's a hell of a job."

The bishop of Peterborough, who initiated the campaign, said the church "can be too damned refined for its own good." A spokesman for the ad agency said, "The trouble is that the Church of England's unpaid publicity is nearly always bad...."

Episcopal Foundation annual report reflects positive view of church

"In what's been mandated the Decade of Evangelism, our sense is that there's considerable health and strength across the board--whether it be in the foothills of Appalachia or in the classrooms of Episcopal seminaries," said Episcopal Church Foundation president Peter Megargee Brown in releasing the annual report, "Foundation for the Future: Building the Community of Faith." Instead of the "negative news about mainline denominations," Brown said the foundation has "quite a different story to tell--a story of growth, creative and aggressive ministry in difficult situations, and tremendous commitment on the part of the people of God." Since the foundation was created in 1949, it has given over \$1 million to doctoral students, \$4.5 million to fund innovative projects, and loaned dioceses more than \$10 million to rebuild church and parish buildings. For the last three years it has been involved in a program to strengthen the ordained leadership of the church, the Cornerstone Project. In its first round of grants for 1990, the foundation awarded 10 grants for a total of \$163,100. Included were several grants for communications--computer equipment for *Episcopal Life* and funds to start a central photo library for the Church Center--and several for leadership training and development.

Clergy play prominent role in new East German government

Four Protestant clergy have been elected to prominent roles in the new East German government, including the ministries of defense and disarmament and the foreign ministry. Fourteen clergy were elected to Parliament in recognition of the prominent role they played in the opposition movement that toppled the Communist government last fall. As a further sign of the thaw, the new rector of Humboldt University in East Berlin is the first theologian to head the school since 1931.

Nicaraguan Christians supporting Sandinistas stunned by election

For Christians in Nicaragua who support the Sandinista revolution the recent election is described as "a Good Friday." In small meetings they are analyzing the results, trying to determine "why we were so wrong about what was going to happen." Defeated President Daniel Ortega made an appearance at one meeting and said, "The revolution, like Christ, was crucified. But the revolution, like Christ, will be resurrected." A group of Roman Catholics prepared a pastoral letter that said Nicaragua is experiencing "a moment of temptation and testing, but also of grace. The Sandinista revolutionary process is passing through its test of fire." Church activists also promise they will help the revolutionary party they champion to evaluate the loss and make whatever reforms are necessary, to seek leaders who will serve the poor rather than seek personal advantage from their party positions.

First woman diocesan bishop returns to England for visit

The Rev. Penelope Jamieson of New Zealand, who will be consecrated June 29 as the first woman to head a diocese in the Anglican Communion, returned home to England "to tap the episcopal wisdom of the Church of

England." She also visited the Diocese of Edinburgh, linked in partnership to Jamieson's Diocese of Dunedin. She stayed with Bishop Richard Holloway, a family friend, but declined his invitation to celebrate the Eucharist. She expressed sympathy with women in England who are seeking ordination but did not want to enter the controversy and debate. "In New Zealand it has not been the custom to ask people outright if they approve of the ministry of women, and our experience is that over the years minds have gently changed as they became aware that God's church was not going to collapse." She said at a London news conference that she sees her ministry as one of "reassurance," that women priests have been "quietly, consistently reassuring people," and that this is now taking on international dimensions as the Anglican Church tries to overcome differences on the issue of women in the priesthood.

Middle East Council releases Pentecost prayer for peace

The Middle East Council of Churches released a second prayer for peace in the Holy Land, intended to be read in churches on Pentecost, June 3. It follows a Palm Sunday prayer that caused considerable controversy for stirring what some said were anti-Israeli sentiments. The Pentecost prayer says: "Along with all the others with whom we live, with all nations and peoples, we would enter a new time, a time of transformation, when hatred is replaced by love, violence by dialogue, condemnation by forgiveness, self-centeredness by sharing." Jewish critics of the Palm Sunday prayer did not object to the Pentecost prayer, saying it had none of the political overtones of the first prayer and did not contain what some perceived as Christian triumphalism.

Judge's habit of praying before court lands him in court

A North Carolina judge who opens court every morning with prayer was in a Charlotte courtroom to defend the practice against charges that it is unconstitutional and a violation of the First Amendment that requires separation of church and state. "The prayer sets a proper tone, that this court is interested in truth, justice, and mercy," Judge Bill Constangy told the court. "In my courtroom we have less emotion, more calmness, less disorder, less hubbub, less noise." The judge was accused of bringing his personal religious passions into the courtroom, but his lawyer said the prayer is "not done as a religious exercise, it's done for a secular purpose." The 67-word prayer the judge recites to open court says: "O Lord, our God, our Father in heaven, we pray this morning that you will place your divine guiding hand on this courtroom and that with your mighty outstretched arm you will protect the innocent, give justice to those who have been harmed and mercy to us all. Let truth be heard and wisdom be reflected in the light of your presence here with us today. Amen."

Church of Ireland votes for ordination of women

The General Synod of the Church of Ireland, meeting in Dublin on May 17, voted in favor of the ordination of women to the priesthood and the episcopate. Almost 70 percent of the clergy and almost 86 percent of lay delegates voted in favor. In commenting on the vote, the Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland, the Most Rev. Robin Eames, shared with delegates what he had learned as head of the Archbishop of Canterbury's Commission on Communion and Women in the Episcopate. Eames said he had gained new insights into "the thoughts, feelings, consideration, the aspirations,

hopes and fears of our fellow members of the Anglican Communion." He said he had listened to the depth of feeling on both sides of the issue--those who express reservations but also to women who have talked of "the pain, frustration, and hopes that they have nurtured." Eames said he was determined to "do everything in my power to see that the views of those who, in good conscience, cannot assent to the ordination of women....will be treated with respect and that the legitimacy of such a position of dissent be fully recognized."

Task force will press for continued ordination of gays and lesbians

Members of several Episcopal social justice ministries have joined to form a Task Force for Continuing Lesbian/Gay Ordination that will collect signatures from those who have participated in ordinations of openly gay and lesbian persons--or would be willing to do so. A May 24 press release says the task force is composed of members of the Episcopal Women's Caucus, Integrity, the Urban Caucus and others groups that "have traditionally worked together at General Conventions." In a letter the task force said, "It is time for Episcopalians to stand up and insist that the issue here is not Jack Spang or any one ordinand. The issue is faithful response to the movement of the Spirit in our lives and in our church."

Ecumenical leaders meet with Pope during his visit to Mexico

A group of ecumenical leaders in Mexico--Episcopal, Lutheran, Orthodox, Mennonite, and Church of the Nazarene--greeted Pope John Paul II during his visit to Mexico in early May. Bishop Sergio Carranza-Gomez, bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Mexico, gave a message to the Pope at the apostolic residence in Mexico City. The statement confessed that "we have been able to accomplish little toward the noble cause of unity for which Christ hoped." Although the support of ecumenical cooperation and understanding varies greatly, "we are convinced of the legitimacy and rightness of our undertaking and desire to continue our ecumenical work deliberately and unselfishly through prayer, dialogue, and study, stimulated by Christian love and with the hope that we will see fully realized the unity which we now possess in Christ."

PEOPLE

Deaconess Marian Brown, who ministered to Native Americans in the Western United States for more than 25 years, died on May 11 of heart failure in Episcopal Church Home, Hockessin, Delaware. Miss Brown, 88, had been a social worker in Philadelphia for seven years before being named a deaconess in the church in 1939. Church officials have identified her as the last surviving member of the deaconess order, which has since been discontinued by the Episcopal Church. Miss Brown ministered to the Navajo and Arapahoe tribes prior to retiring in 1968.

Harry C. Griffith has given up the executive directorship of the Anglican Fellowship of Prayer to assume full-time leadership of the Bible Reading Fellowship (BRF), an organization he founded 19 years ago to provide Bible study for Episcopalians in the United States. "We'll no longer simply be trying to distribute our own Bible study materials, but we'll be encouraging and

facilitating Bible study generally throughout the church," Griffith said recently in his Winter Park, Florida, office. The BRF's Advisory Board includes four diocesan bishops and a number of biblical scholars.

The Rev. Dr. Nathan D. Baxter has been appointed administrative dean and associate professor of pastoral theology at the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, Massachusetts. His primary responsibilities will include the development and implementation of programs aimed at enhancing student life and staff well-being. Dr. Baxter, who will assume his new position on July 1, is currently dean of Lancaster Theological Seminary and associate professor of church and ministry, and also a member of the Union of Black Episcopalians.

Episcopal Life editor Jerry Hames has announced the addition of three persons to his editorial staff. **The Rev. Jerry Fargo**, 52, has joined the staff as art director; **Daniel Cattau**, 39, has been contracted as news editor; and **Carol Seischab**, 46, has been named administrative assistant. Fargo's experience includes several years as a graphic designer and layout artist with three weekly tabloids. Cattau, a freelance writer, was formerly news bureau director of the Lutheran Council in the USA. Seischab has worked at the Episcopal Church Center in New York for two years, most recently as administrative deputy to the Rev. David Perry, director of the education for mission and ministry unit.

The Rev. Vine Deloria, a retired archdeacon and missionary among the Sioux Indians in South Dakota, died recently at a nursing home in Tucson at the age of 88. Son of one of the first Sioux to be ordained into the Episcopal Church and grandson of a renowned religious leader of the traditional Dakota religion, Deloria was executive secretary for Indian work in the Episcopal Church, the first Native American to be appointed to such a position in any major Protestant church. Bishop Craig Anderson of South Dakota called him one of the contemporary saints of the church, "a visionary" who set the agenda for Native American ministry in the church.



news features

90143

OPEN STATEMENT ON CAPITAL PUNISHMENT FROM THE MOST REVEREND EDMOND L. BROWNING, PRESIDING BISHOP OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH MAY 1990

Today, I am moved to confirm once again the Episcopal Church's opposition to capital punishment. The church has maintained this position since 1958, and reaffirmed it again in 1979. I take this moment to reaffirm it again for the 1990s.

The taking of human life diminishes us as a people. We all hate the crime of a person who would take another life. But in using the death penalty against the one who has taken a life means we end up committing the very act we found so repugnant in the first place. And thus we are diminished, both in the sight of God and one another.

The taking of a human life, for whatever reason, is an affront to God. The Christian community affirms that all persons are made in the image of God, thus making all people holy. The death penalty is an assault on God's purposes in creation.

The recent wave of support for and use of capital punishment troubles me greatly. For the church, an eye-for-an-eye system of justice has no place. Jesus called instead for a love of neighbor, even of one's enemies.

Jesus told us that the greatest gift we could give is to lay down our own lives for another. Conversely, the taking of another life must be viewed as the greatest sacrilege. The heart of the Christian faith is found in Jesus' offering of his own life, taken by use of the death penalty under Roman law.

In these times when violence is so often used as a solution to violence itself, I wish to align myself with those who are today opposing the use of capital punishment. I commend them for their efforts to light a torch of conscience in our nation. I hope our legislators will want to revisit the death penalty issue and question the increasing use of this sad practice.

Of course, legislators will respond to the will of the people. And I pray God that no politician will again be able to gain election on the promise of support for capital punishment. This is not about partisan politics or vote counting. It is about morality, human dignity, and respect for ourselves as people of justice and mercy.

The church's voice must be heard in this national debate. And, without hesitation, I place my voice at the forefront of the Episcopal Church's opposition to any form of capital punishment.

90144

Opinion feature--

**FIVE HUNDRED YEARS AFTER COLUMBUS, WHAT'S THERE TO CELEBRATE--
A LEGACY OF GENOCIDE AND SLAVERY?**

by Owanah Anderson

Year after next we are in for merrymaking, revelry, and fireworks that'll make the 1976 bicentennial celebration look like a three-year-old's birthday party. The official U.S. Christopher Columbus Quincentary Jubilee Commission is pushing forward, funded by a significant congressional appropriation, without an American Indian sitting among its illustrious membership.

What's there, really, to celebrate? We know that Christopher Columbus was no more the European "discoverer" of America than Pocahontas was the discoverer of Great Britain. Scandinavian Vikings already had settlements here in the 11th century, and British fishermen probably fished the shores of Canada for decades before Columbus even left Italy.

Native Americans had built great civilizations with many millions of people long before Columbus wandered lost into the Caribbean. There were at least 300 functioning societies with a sense of government, and language, history, culture and relationships with a creator. However, it was almost half a century after the historic voyage of the Italian sailor sailing under a Spanish flag before the great theological debates in Europe determined if we were, in fact, human...with souls. It wasn't until 1537 that Pope Paul III issued a papal bull pronouncing: Hey, these people ARE indeed "true men." Human.

Should this nation celebrate invasion, genocide, slavery, and exploitation of the wealth of the land?

The *Lakota Times* says that honoring Columbus Day honors a legacy of genocide.

Columbus's log entry on his first encounter with the Arawak people of the Caribbean reads: "...they will make fine servants." He and his successors went at the "Indians" with genocidal ferocity; probably three million died from war, slavery, and labor in the mines on the island of Hispaniola (now Haiti and the Dominican Republic) in the first 15 years after 1492.

Autumn would hardly be complete in any elementary school without construction-paper replicas of the three cute ships--the *Nina*, the *Pinta*, the *Santa Maria*-- or without drawings of dear Queen Isabella, trudging down to the pawn shop to pawn her jewels to finance the voyage. According to the *Lakota Times*, this myth of the pawned jewels obscures the true and more sinister story of how the junket got financed. The good Queen Izzie and her consort, Ferdinand, invested in his excursion ONLY on condition that Columbus would repay this investment with profit by bringing back gold, spices, and other tribute from Asia.

This pressing need to pay off his debt underlies the frantic tone of Columbus's diaries as he raced from one Caribbean island to the next, stealing everything of value.

After he failed to contact the emperor of China, the traders of India, or the merchants of Japan, Christopher decided to pay for his voyage in the one important commodity he had found in ample supply--human lives.

He seized 1,200 Taino Indians from the island of Hispaniola...crammed as many onto his ships as would fit...and sent them to Spain, where they were paraded naked through the streets of Seville and sold as slaves in 1495.

Columbus tore children from their parents, husbands from wives. On board Columbus's slave ships, hundreds died; the sailors tossed the Indian bodies into the Atlantic.

Because Columbus captured more Indian slaves than he could transport to Spain in his small ships, he put them to work in mines and plantations that he, his family, and his followers created throughout the Caribbean.

Columbus's marauding band hunted Indians for sport and profit--beating, raping, torturing, killing, and then using the Indian bodies as food for hunting dogs. Within four years of his arrival on Hispaniola, his men had killed or exported one-third of the original Indian population estimated at 300,000.

Within another 50 years, the Taino people had become extinct--the first casualties of the holocaust of American Indians. The plantation owners then turned to the American mainland and Africa for new slaves to follow the tragic path of the Taino.

Several church organizations--national, international, and by communions--have called for the Christian community to commit to the observance of the 500th anniversary of the voyage of Christopher Columbus in a manner that respects the dignity of Native Americans. Protests of the Columbus celebration have been issued by the World Council of Churches Programme to Combat Racism, the Indian Ministries Task Force of Joint Action and Strategy Committee, National Committee on Indian Work of the Episcopal Church, and the Lambeth Conference of Anglican bishops.

In 1989, Executive Council of the Episcopal Church, the governing authority of the church between General Conventions, adopted a resolution that reads:

Resolved, that the Executive Council of the Episcopal Church respect and affirm the dignity of Native Americans and call upon its member dioceses to analyze and reflect upon differing effects that colonialism has brought to our various people--colonizer and colonized--and to act faithfully and prophetically on that reflection as the Church in 1992 observes the 500th anniversary of the voyage of Christopher Columbus.

Jack Weatherford, who teaches at Macalester College in St. Paul, Minnesota, published a splendid book in 1988, *Indian Givers*. He says:

American Indians had an attitude toward the natural world that anticipated modern ecology, and religious concepts and spiritual insights that were and are profoundly enriching for the rest of humanity, laws often more humane than their European equivalents, a collective summa of wisdom and experience almost totally ignored by the culturally arrogant white newcomers.

Columbus arrived in the New World in 1492, but America has yet to be discovered.

--Owanah Anderson is staff officer for Indian Ministries of the Episcopal Church.

90145

'CHURCH OF THE PRESIDENTS,' BUILT ON THE WRECKAGE OF WAR, CELEBRATES 175 YEARS IN NATION'S CAPITAL

With the smell of charred timbers and the wreckage of the War of 1812 deeply etched in its memory, a small band of Anglicans in the nation's capital set out in 1815 to build a church. St. John's Episcopal Church gathered recently to celebrate its 175-year history and look to the future.

"Nobody could have looked at those burned-out public buildings (after the War of 1812) and predicted that 175 years later we would be sitting in this place and looking out upon this faithful parish family," said Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning at the anniversary sermon on Sunday, May 6. "They would call it a miracle."

The yellow stucco church, across from the White House on Lafayette Square in Washington, was designed by Benjamin Henry Latrobe, the same architect who oversaw the construction of the U.S. Capitol and the rebuilding of the White House after it was burned by the British in 1812. The cornerstone was laid in 1815 and the first services held a few years later.

Soon after the church was constructed, the congregation expanded the tiny, cross-shaped Byzantine structure, and a nave, belltower, and gracefully columned porch were added. The 1,000-pound bronze bell placed in the steeple was cast by the Paul Revere works of Boston from a British cannon captured during the War of 1812.

The first president of the United States to visit St. John's was James Madison. Every president since Madison has worshipped in St. John's at least once, giving it the nickname, "the church of the presidents."

Dolly Madison was a communicant, as was President James Buchanan. Abraham Lincoln slipped into a pew for afternoon services, and Chester Arthur donated a stained glass window in memory of his wife.

The Rev. John C. Harper, rector of St. John's since 1963, has seen seven presidents in the church. John F. Kennedy attended Harper's installation in 1963 and sat in the first pew. Lyndon Johnson slipped into the church for prayer in November 1963, the day after Kennedy's assassination. Gerald Ford worshiped there frequently. Ronald Reagan attended services on the mornings of his two inaugurations--and on Sunday, March 29, 1981--the day before he was wounded in an assassination attempt. George and Barbara Bush attend St. John's often when they are in Washington for the weekend.

Harper has referred to St. John's, nestled between the headquarters of the AFL-CIO and the Veterans Affairs Department, "a symbol of small power amid great power...a reminder that not all of the things in this life are large."

With such a highly visible location in the midst of a political city, Harper insists that he must maintain a nonpartisan position as rector of St. John's. "It's fine to be called the church of the presidents," a friend once told him, "but be sure that you're never known as the church *of* the president."

"Our nation--any nation--is a nation under God," said Browning in the anniversary sermon. "We are here to remind it that its power comes from God and belongs to God, and that we are accountable, whatever political beliefs we may hold, in our use of power." He challenged the St. John's to build on the rich tradition it inherited and to press into the future with confidence. "Pray...that our courage to proclaim the good news to this brave new world will match the courage of those long-ago souls who brought us here this morning," he said.

---Jeffrey Penn

90146

EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN FLORIDA SCENE OF SHOOTING

by A.E.P. Wall

MELBOURNE BEACH, Florida, May 23--Nobody was a more energetic volunteer in the parish than Douglas James Pearson. Sunday night he enjoyed homemade ice cream at the rector's home. Monday morning (May 21) he shot two church members and then killed himself in the center aisle of St. Sebastian's By-the-Sea Episcopal Church.

The Rev. George Smodell, 63, a deacon, spent six hours screaming for help in the church office. Parishioner Diane Conarro, shot twice in her home before Pearson headed for the church, was in critical condition.

Parishioners instantly reached out to Jan Pearson, the stunned widow, embracing her in prayer. The Rev. Perry W. Collins had already arranged for Pearson's ashes, after cremation, to be placed in St. Sebastian's memorial garden.

"You cannot make sense out of the act because it was irrational," Father Collins said the morning after the shootings, eyes smarting from lingering tear gas. "God was looking out for us." Yet, he said, "People know this is something we're never going to make sense out of."

There were feelings of vicarious hurt, empathy, love. "I have not heard anger," Collins said. An instantaneous drenching of the parish community in Christian love was, he said, a tribute to the members of the church and to his predecessors. He brushed aside praise of his own leadership. "Right now things seem so healthy," he said in reference to the spiritual and emotional dimensions of parish life just 24 hours after the deadly violence ended.

"Doug finally found peace," Collins said. But his life had been troubled. He was understood to be manic-depressive. He had assured Collins the night before his rampage that he would seek immediate professional help.

On that Saturday he became enraged by the work of a floor-waxing crew at the church. Police went to Pearson's home where Pearson agreed to turn over 12 handguns, all covered by required permits. But Pearson retained at least two weapons. On the following night Pearson spent hours conversing at the rector's home. "Doug was basically a good person," Collins said. "He just snapped."

The next morning, Monday, Pearson drove to the rector's home. Collins, his wife Vicky, and their daughter had left the house to drive to Orlando, about 75 miles away. Pearson apparently broke in and fired seven rounds inside the house.

Pearson headed directly for the home of Jay and Diane Conarro. He and Jay Conarro had argued recently about church renovations. Mrs. Conarro answered the door, and Pearson shot her twice in the abdomen, but because he had fired seven shots at the Collins home Pearson's weapon was then empty. He was unable to shoot Jay Conarro, who rushed to the door when he heard the shots. Pearson squeezed the trigger, but nothing happened, and he fled. That empty weapon is part of what Collins calls the first miracle, probably saving the life of Jay Conarro.

Pearson then drove four blocks to the church. It was just before 9 a.m. There he encountered Deacon Smodell and secretary Barbara Baldwin. He told Smodell he was going to shoot him for siding with Jay Conarro in the earlier argument about church renovations. He fired once, wounding Smodell in both

thighs. He told the secretary to leave, another miracle. She and David Oraboni, who was doing construction work in the narthex, fled.

Oraboni telephoned police, described the scene, and named the church. But, he said, police rushed to the wrong church. He had to summon them from a nearby Lutheran church to St. Sebastian's By-the-Sea, where they misread the situation.

Although Pearson shot himself to death about 40 minutes after arriving at the church, police erroneously thought he was holding one or more hostages. The deacon, first heaving his shoe through the church window in an unsuccessful effort to get the attention of police, was left alone, seated within a few feet of the window, for about six hours before police threw tear-gas canisters through all of the windows of the church.

When the deacon then crawled to the front door, police held a gun to his head and dragged him painfully across the concrete sidewalk before accepting his assurance that he was the victim and that the perpetrator had been dead for hours.

After shooting him, Pearson told Deacon Smodell that he was going to commit suicide. Smodell begged him to go to the altar and pray, but he took only a few steps down the aisle before turning a .357 caliber revolver on himself. He fell near a marble baptismal font he had recently helped move to the aisle.

"Doug was an old-line Anglican in Canada before he moved here," a church member said while pondering the cleanup of tear-gas crystals from the nursery carpet. It was his traditionalism that stimulated the move of the font from the front to the rear of the nave.

Deacon Smodell said he prayed for the bleeding to stop in his two major wounds, and it did. Then he prayed for relief from intense pain, and at once he felt a numbness. When Smodell arrived at the hospital, Father Collins said, he did not require a transfusion.

But Diane Conarro received 16 pints of blood.

At nearby Grace Lutheran Church a sign facing the street proclaimed: "Saints of St. Sebastian: We join you in prayer."

--A.E.P. Wall is director of communications in the Diocese of Central Florida.

90147

HER ONLY AGENDA IS LOVE--GEORGIA WOMAN JOINS AIDS MINISTRY

by Skip Connett

On a certain Sunday three months ago, a gaunt man in a wheelchair was seen sitting near the front pew of Trinity Episcopal Church in Columbus, Georgia. His name was Lamar Wilson, and he was a stranger there to all but three people. So when he turned and saw a familiar face on the other side of the sanctuary, he smiled and waved.

The woman was Frances Morton, a 78-year-old retired teacher whose AIDS ministry recently had been featured in the local newspaper. Now, unexpectedly, in the presence of family and friends, that ministry was being

put to its greatest test.

"I thought, truthfully, do I have the guts to get out of my seat and sit with him, or do I sit here like a bump on a log," Morton recalled.

Morton did get up, walked down the aisle, and sat beside Wilson. When communion came and Wilson's attendant chose not to go, she pushed him to the altar, inadvertently yet inextricably marking them--he as a PWA (person [living] with AIDS), she as an AIDS caregiver.

Two months after that eventful service, Morton talks freely and passionately about her ministry, calling it the most difficult, yet most rewarding challenge of her life. Largely because of Morton and the church's clergy, Trinity is involved in each level of commitment identified by the Diocese of Atlanta's Task Force on AIDS and has become known in the AIDS community as a welcoming place of worship.

Morton's decision to undertake an AIDS ministry did not come easily. "I spent three months talking about it and praying about it, and still I wasn't sure. I said to myself, 'This could be the dumbest thing you've ever done.'"

A prominent member of an old established church in a conservative Southern town, Morton had calculated the costs. There would be rejection from friends. There would be misunderstanding from her children. And there would be the anguish of watching young lives deteriorate before her eyes.

Despite years of volunteer work that has taken her to the city's poorhouses and prisons, Morton felt unprepared. She read AIDS literature. She attended a frank and explicit two-day seminar on AIDS ministry sponsored by the city health department. But when the day arrived for her to attend her first AIDS support group meeting, she was so nervous she could hardly breathe.

"Hi, I'm Frances Morton, and I'm here because I'm interested in AIDS," she told the group. The room was silent. Finally, a young man said, "We don't often see someone interested in AIDS." The understatement brought an outburst of nervous laughter.

Instead of rejecting her, the group made her feel welcome, she says, and soon she was experiencing a closeness she had never experienced before in a group.

The heart of Morton's ministry is attending the weekly meetings, offering members her support during their moments of grief, anger, and fear. Since that first meeting less than a year ago, five members of the group have died, including the six-month-old daughter of an infected couple.

Sometimes the strain is too much, she says, and she must pull away for awhile. The group understands this.

"Frances is not a crusader but a person called to love," says the Rev. Rick Williams, Trinity's assistant rector. "Her agenda is to love, and that is the only agenda she has."

Through Morton, Williams met Lamar Wilson when he was hospitalized last year. It was then that Wilson, a hairstylist who had grown up a Southern Baptist, had shared his spiritual struggles and his search for acceptance.

"He was curious about the liturgy of the Anglican Church and had experienced it at times and knew it was an open and nonjudgmental church," Williams said.

Wilson also discussed the implications of coming to worship at Trinity. One of Wilson's concerns was how the congregation would react if he took communion. To erase any fears he decided to take the Lord's Supper by intinction.

"He was like a kid that day," recalled Ken, the young man who brought Wilson to Trinity. "He got a lot out of it, and everyone who spoke to him was friendly. No one treated him differently."

Knowing Morton would be there made the visit easier for Wilson, he said, adding that "to us, Frances is a saint."

Although several members reached out to Wilson after the service, many members greeted his presence with ambivalence. "I was aware that some people would be horrified," said Morton, "but the truth is that the only thing I heard was positive."

What Morton didn't hear from people was what concerned her. One member, she learned, stopped taking communion. Another member consulted her physician for assurance that AIDS was not communicable through the common cup.

The Rev. Duncan Sinclair is an associate rector at Trinity and a pastoral counselor who has worked with PWAs, including Wilson. "I've seen quiet people [living] with AIDS who come to the altar all the time, and no one knew," he said, "but that wasn't the case with Lamar."

Not only did Wilson's health set him apart, but he had been active in AIDS education locally and across the state. Through his leadership, the city's first organization for PWAs was incorporated.

"I was delighted when Lamar came to Trinity," Sinclair said. "I had known of his struggles in his own family and his own church, and to see him as a part of the worshipping community was exciting."

Since Wilson's visit, several PWAs have come to Trinity's early morning Sunday service and its Wednesday healing service, said Williams.

Wilson's first visit to Trinity was to be his last. After that Sunday, his health rapidly deteriorated. Two months ago, his leg was amputated, and he became bedridden. The day he was to be interviewed for this story he died, with his closest friends gathered at his bedside. Morton was among them.

One of the challenges of her AIDS ministry is not only living out her Christian faith but coming to terms with her own mortality. It is a challenge, Morton says, that comes easier with age. "One of the advantages of being older is that I have come to grips with death for myself." She paused and looked out across the quiet courtyard of the church. "I'm not sure where this will lead," she continued, "but I do know that for the first time in my life I felt so strongly that God was calling me to do this and that as a Christian I must accept these people as people of God."

--Skip Connett is religion editor of the Columbus Ledger-Enquirer and a member of Trinity Church.

90148

CHURCHES IN ALBANY SUPPORT DROP-IN CENTER FOR THOSE WHO ARE LIVING WITH AIDS

by W. Michael Losinger

There was standing room only at Grace and Holy Innocents Church in Albany, New York, on May 13 as Bishop David Ball blessed an icon of Damien the Leper, a 19th-century Roman Catholic priest who went to live at a Hawaiian leper colony and eventually died of the disease.

Members from over a dozen participating Episcopal parishes in the Diocese of Albany joined in the dedicatory service of healing and Eucharist, a celebration culminating two years of discussion, planning--and action leading to a drop-in center for those who are living with AIDS. Celebrant and preacher the Rev. Randolph Frew drew long applause when he read congratulations from Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning. Browning emphasized the Episcopal Church's commitment to the issue, and he expressed gratitude for the leadership of the parish and its "energy and vision around the project."

In Jacksonville, Florida, St. John's Cathedral prayed for the Damien Center, which is a companion AIDS ministry to its own Stephens AIDS Ministry. A member of that group carried its gift banner in the Albany service.

The Damien icon's proclamation that "Our Lord permits us now and then to pick a beautiful rose among sharp thorns" was especially appropriate for many persons living with AIDS, their friends and caregivers, for whom life can often seem to have all too many thorns.

The Damien Center, which opened in Albany one Thursday night in April, is an attempt to bring some beauty and some balm, a rose of sorts. The center, a ministry of Grace and Holy Innocents and supporting parishes, provides nurture, support, counsel, and information to persons who test positive for the HIV virus and AIDS, and to those who support them.

The center in the diocese, which stretches from the mid-Hudson Valley to New York's Canadian border, is one of the first AIDS drop-in centers in the nation. The program grew out of the work of the diocesan AIDS task force and a local physician who treats many AIDS patients. It received additional impetus from the National Episcopal AIDS Conference in Cincinnati last fall (ENS 89222, November 8). Staffed by volunteer counselors and a priest each night, it is now open Tuesday and Thursday nights to provide a "living-room" center for kinship and help. A coordinator is also available each night to assist volunteers and to provide information about services available in the Albany area for persons living with AIDS.

Organizers hope to expand the center to five-night-a-week operation and to add a food pantry, clothing closet, and support group meeting rooms, with the entire operation open to the growing number of people in the Capital District who are living with AIDS or who have tested positive for the HIV virus.

According to the Rev. Ronald Gerber, rector at Grace and Holy Innocents, the Damien Center "provides a safe, nonjudgmental, and supportive place for persons who may have no family, for the increasingly isolated, and for those who, like all of us, are sometimes overwhelmed by the tasks of daily life."

In addition to worship services at the center, participating parishes will host monthly dinners, and a special committee will provide AIDS seminars in

parishes throughout the diocese to educate and mobilize Episcopal resources for increased AIDS ministry.

Volunteers spent several weekends renovating, painting, and cleaning the three meeting rooms at the church that make up the center. Local chapters of Integrity and Dignity, Episcopal and Roman Catholic organizations for gays and lesbians, joined to purchase new carpets, and several parishes and other supporters have donated furniture.

The center is located at 498 Clinton Avenue in Albany, New York. The telephone number is (518) 482-1689.

--W. Michael Losinger is a Damien Center volunteer.

90149

OPEN LETTER FROM THE PRESIDING BISHOP ON FIFTH NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER FOR PERSONS LIVING WITH AIDS

During my entire tenure as presiding bishop, the Episcopal Church will be living with HIV/AIDS. Some of us may still claim not to know any person who is HIV positive or who has full-blown AIDS, but today's statistics indicate that such a claim will be short lived.

In accordance with the 1988 General Convention resolution, Sunday, October 14, has been designated the Fifth National Day of Prayer for Persons Living with AIDS and those who minister with them. Our October designation coincides with the annual HIV/AIDS Awareness Month in this country.

This year, I want to ask two things of us. First, if a congregation is unable to set aside the second Sunday of October, another Sunday in October may be designated. What matters is that we make a response. Second, I would ask each congregation to remember persons living with HIV/AIDS every Sunday during the Prayers of the People, and each weekday when prayer is offered publicly. I am convinced that prayer is our first initiative in the midst of this pandemic and our sure source of strength for our various HIV/AIDS ministries.

Many persons of this church have already died of this disease or are living with it now. Thus, we must continue our life and work in communion and fellowship with one another, listening to one another, embracing and loving one another.

Pray for health, pray for guidance and courage, pray for a cure, and pray for faithfulness to Gospel compassion and the well-being and dignity of every human being. God bless you all.

Edmond L. Browning
Presiding Bishop

90150

KENYANS VOTE TO ORDAIN WOMEN--WITH HELP FROM VIRGINIA VISITOR

By the time the Diocese of Eldoret in Kenya voted in principle to ordain women as priests, the synod delegates had heard a woman preach, received communion from her, and had seen her with her husband and children.

"Just telling my story opened up their minds and hearts that life can be normal, even if Mom is in seminary or a priest," said the Rev. Rosemary G. Sullivan, 43, rector of the Church of St. Clement in Alexandria, Virginia. The late April unanimous vote in the northwest Kenyan diocese sets in process a study of women's ordination to be presented to the 1992 synod. At present, the Diocese of Maseno South is the only Anglican diocese in Kenya that ordains women.

Sullivan's invitation came after she had dinner last December with Bishop Alexander K. Muge of Eldoret during his visit to the United States. Citing the bishop's support for women's ordination, Sullivan said that he asked her to join him in the back of the procession at the opening service at St. Mathew's Pro-Cathedral.

Sullivan was impressed with the role women play in Kenyan society as bankers, lawyers, and educators. "If they have that kind of role in society," she said, "they should have it in the church." During the debate, however, Sullivan noticed that the church had different theological--and tribal--perspectives on women's ordination.

In one tribe women are not allowed to look at the dead. Some delegates asked, "How can a woman minister to the dying?" In another tribe, only a man can name a child. Some delegates wondered, "Who does the naming during a baptism?" Questions also were raised about "ritual uncleanness" of the woman celebrant in the Eucharist, said Sullivan.

Sullivan said it impressed her when one woman used the argument that Kenyans should ordain woman because they oppose other forms of separation, such as apartheid in South Africa. "That really brought down the house," said Sullivan. She felt, however, that many delegates reacted positively to her sermon and presence at the synod with her husband, Edmund, 14-year-old son, Ned, and 12-year-old daughter, Meg.

The sense of family is important, Sullivan observed, because many priests have 12 churches in each "parish" in remote areas near the Sudanese and Ethiopian borders. "The wife and children have to be a part of that ministry," she said.

Sullivan said that she envisions other trips to Africa and at least one more to the Diocese of Eldoret: "In my closing remarks to the synod, I promised them I would return for the ordination of women--in a few years."

--by Dan Cattau, news editor of *Episcopal Life*

